



Biosketch

PonJola Coney, M.D. is a faculty member, scholar, teacher, mentor, and administrator whose exemplary career spans nearly three decades. Since receiving her doctorate from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in 1978, she established herself as a deeply respected academician in the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

She completed an internship and residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and a fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at Pennsylvania Hospital (University of Pennsylvania) in Philadelphia, PA.

Her service to academic medicine and to her discipline includes administrative roles as Director, Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility; Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; and Dean, School of Medicine. Her teaching, scholarship, service and clinical activities underscore her role as a major contributor to the overall academic success of the Medical School, which has occurred in several outstanding academic institutions.

Dr. Coney's clinical abilities were manifested early in her career, as she established academic programs of Assisted Reproduction at four successive institutions, yielding more than 500 births while personally directing clinical and laboratory activities, conducting research, and training residents and fellows in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. Her research interest lies in identifying the determinants and etiologies in reproductive disorders that contribute to health disparities for minority women. She most recently established a Center for Research in Women's Health in which Clinical Trials are underway that would examine determinants of bone mineral density and uterine leiomyoma in African American women. This is collaborative work that likely will be of particular relevance to understanding the disparity in these areas between white and black women.

Dr. Coney has taken a keen interest in increasing the presence of women and minorities in positions of senior faculty rank and leadership. She was a founder of the unique professional organization, Society for Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine. She mentors numerous residents, fellows, and junior faculty who continue to seek her counsel. She has created and implemented a core curriculum for disadvantaged students seeking admission to professional schools. She has trained numerous undergraduate students and residents. Her students, during her tenure as dean, most from historically underrepresented groups, have gone on to successful careers at leading universities around the country.

Dr. Coney currently serves as Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.

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